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The Sebastopol of To-Day.

Twenty-eight times, says a Russian paper, the earth has run around the sun since the last bomb burst over the "august city" of Sebastopool, and yet the ruins of houses, churches, and forts are as fresh and plentiful as if they had been made but yesterday. The least sea breeze raises the clouds of dust and sand, and the unhappy city stands a sad reproach to Russian neglect. And yet it is a holy place. There are the historical earthworks, and Malakoff hill, saturated with Russian blood. There fought, suffered, and died, nay, marched to a sure death, hundreds of thousands of Russian soldiers. There is the historical grave of a legion of Russian heroes, but no proud mausoleum crowns that tomb. It is covered with yellow grass, thistles and heaps of dust. Alas! such a grave never suggests the thought "In glorious death there is immortal glory." No, it rather says "Nations, like men, are ungrateful."

During twenty-eight years our country has not done anything to assist in the resurrection of Sebastopol, and the authorities have seemed to thwart every sign of life there. Sebastopol is one of the commercial ports in the world, but the ministry of the navy greedily sticks to every piece of land indispensable to the merchants. And so the Sebastopol of to-day is neither a commercial nor a naval port. Before the Crimean war there were in Sebastopol 50,000 inhabitants, and now it hardly counts a third of that number. Certainly, under the present circumstances, the Sebastopolians cannot rebuild their city with their own means. Nature has made a Sebastopol and the Crimea in general a real gem. Winter is not known there, and delicate semi-tropical fruits and the beautiful sea make it a most desirable resort for invalids and tourists. It is our Italy, or our Florida. But our countrymen are so accustomed to frosts, snow and ice, that they do not appear to care at all for that semi-tropical paradise, the Crimea. In Sebastopol there is a small cape called "the cape of Free Contemplations." We wonder what thoughts are in the minds of our countrymen who visit that cape. In view of the ruins, of the dust and dirt of the "august city," of the 100,000 heroes, of the rare natural forts not utilized, does it not occur to them that Russia is playing the part of a step-mother toward her bravest and most unfortunate child, Sebastopol?

The greatest sale of pictures ever known in point of number, consisting of 28,000, has commenced at the Salle Drouot, Paris, and is likely to last for several years to come. This extraordinary collection was made by a M. Borniche, who recently died. After having amassed a large fortune in industrial pursuits, he occupied his time in purchasing the works of young and unknown artists—according to some people at extremely moderate prices. Two hundred works sold brought an average of £11 each. The sales are to be continued twice a month until next June, by which time only 4,000 out of the 28,000 pictures, water colors, and drawings will be sold. The sales will then cease until the end of the holidays, when they will recommence, and it is calculated that in this manner seven years hence the whole will have been disposed of.

SCIENTIFIC SCRAPS.

The mounting of the shell of the horseshoe crab is described in the *American Naturalist* for October. In this animal the shell splits open around the front edge; and when the animal draws itself through the rent it appears as if it were spewing itself out of its shell. On the other hand, the lobster, in casting its shell, draws itself through a rent along the back of the carapace.

A writer of mathematical bent, says the *Scientific American*, finds from the census returns that there are about 17,000 dentists in the United States, who, he estimates, pack into the teeth of the American people a ton of pure gold annually. Continuing his speculations, he predicts that in the twenty-first century all the gold in the country will be buried in the graveyards.

From a large number of experiments with the antennae of insects, Mr. C. J. A. Porter is led to conclude (1) that the antennae are not the organ of any one or of any combination of what we call the five senses—hearing, seeing, smelling, touching, and tasting; (2) that the power of direction does not lie in the antennae, and (3) that the antennae are the organ of some sense not possessed by us.

Tornadoes occur in the afternoon, generally between two o'clock and evening, four being called the tornado hour. Tornadoes move from southwest to northeast, generally east about twenty degrees north, and their linear movement is ordinarily from thirty to forty miles an hour. Tornadoes occur on sunny days, or when the temperature is very high and the air is thoroughly saturated with moisture. Tornadoes occur when the electrical conditions are high, or when the air is highly charged with electricity.

Finland, "the last-born daughter of the sea," Dr. J. C. Brown says, is the only country in Europe in which sartage—that is, the practice of setting fire to the trees in order to clear the ground—is still carried on extensively. The clearing away of the woods is to prepare the earth for agriculture, but as much, or more, by the preparation of the soil for the cultivation of the seed contemplated, and this is the peculiarity of the usage. The trees growing on the spot selected are burned, and the seed is then sown on the soil thus manured with the ashes of the trees. Should the ground thus cleared not be permanently retained under cultivation, it is likely to become covered again with a crop of self-sown trees of higher pecuniary value.

Going to "Run" Dakota.

"Yes, we're going to Dakota," said one of the party of eight lively young men on board a Lake Shore train, near Toledo. "We're going out to Dakota to run it."

"To run it?" I queried.

"Yes, we mean to run the state, when it becomes a state. Jim over there's to be governor, Henry'll be state treasurer, John will be congressman, and I guess a United States senatorship will be good enough for me." Then the whole party laughed, and another spoke up:

"It isn't as bad as that, stranger. But we have a scheme. We're going out to settle in two or three adjacent counties. After we get started we're going to bring a lot more of our friends out. Some of us are lawyers, some doctors, one a newspaper man, two merchants, and you can bet we are all politicians. We'll go into some of those new counties, help each other into the offices, and when the state is organized, perhaps we'll be strong enough to capture something pretty good. You know it doesn't take a very large crowd of fellows that pull well together to make quite a stir in a little state like that. And we're all from Ohio, too. But keep it quiet, stranger, because the blamed newspapers might get hold of it."

A Grand Deed.

"Did you ever accomplish anything in your life that might be called grand or noble—some action that would distinguish you from your fellow men and to which you can now look back with pleasurable emotions?" was the rather clumsy question put by a visitor to a state-prison convict.

The poor convict mused for a moment and then replied:

"Yes, I have. I once did a grand deed that gave me distinction of a certain sort, but," he added bitterly, "I cannot say that I look back upon it with any pleasurable emotions."

"I am very sorry," returned the visitor, who was a good man, "that you cannot find pleasure in its contemplation. It might afford you blessed consolation in this your hour of trial and darkness. May I ask what this grand deed was?"

"Yes, you may," replied the poor prisoner, while his voice became choked with emotion. "It was grand larceny."

THE COWBOY.

Not Such a Terror as He Seems, says the Veracious Bill Nye.

So much amusing talk is being made recently anent the blood-bedraggled cowboy of the wild West, that I arise as one man to say a few things, not in a dictatorial style, but regarding this so-called or so-esteemed dry land pirate, who, mounted on a little cow pony and under the black flag sails out across the green surge of the plains to scatter the rocky shores of time with the bones of his fellow man.

A great many people wonder where the cowboy, with his abnormal thirst for blood, originated. Where did this young Jesse James, with his gory record and dauntless eye, come from? Was he born in a buffalo wallow at the foot of some rock-ribbed mountain, or did he first breathe thin air along the brink of an alkali pond, where the horned toad and the centipede sang him to sleep and the tarantula tickled him under the chin with its hairy legs.

Careful research and the cold, hard statistics show that the cowboy, as a general thing, was born in an unostentious manner on the farm. I hate to sit down on a beautiful romance and squash the breath out of a romantic dream; but the cowboy who gets too much moist damnation into his system and rides on a gallop up and down Main street shooting out the lights of the beautiful billiard palaces, would be just as unhappy if a mouse ran up his pantaloon leg as you would, gentle reader. He is generally a youth, who thinks he will not earn his $25 per month if he does not yell and whoop and scare little girls into St. Vitus' dance. I've known more cowboys to injure themselves with their own revolvers than to injure any one else. This is evidently because they are more familiar with the hoe than they are with the Smith & Wesson.

One night while I had rooms in the business part of a territorial city in the Rocky Mountain cattle country, I was awakened at about one o'clock, a m, by the most blood curdling cry of 'murder!' I ever heard. It was murder with a big M. Across the street, in the bright light of a restaurant, a dozen cowboys, with broad sombreros and flashing silver braid, huge leather chaperjas, Mexican spurs and orange silk neckties, and with flashing revolvers, were standing. It seemed that a big, red faced Captain Kidd of the band, with his skin full of valley tan, had marched into an ice cream resort with a self-cocker in his hand, and ordered the vanilla coolness for the gang. There being a dozen young folks at the place, mostly male and female, from a neighboring hop, indulging in cream, the proprietor—a meek Norwegian, with thin white hair—deemed it rude and outre to do so. He said something to that effect, whereat the other eleven men of alcoholic courage, let off a yell that froze the cream into a solid glacier and shook two kerosene lamps out of their sockets in the chandeliers.

Thereupon the little Norwegian said:

"Gentlemans, I kain't neffer like dot squealinks and dot kaind of a tings, and you fellers mit dot ledder pantses on and dot funny glose and such a tings like dot better keep kaind of quiet, or I shall call up the policemen mit my delephone."

Then they laughed at him and cried yet again with a loud voice.

This annoyed the ice cream agriculturist, and he took the old ax handle that he used to jam the ice down around the freezer with, and peeled a large area of scalp off the leader's dome of thought, and it hung down over his eyes so that he could not see to shoot with any degree of accuracy.

After he had yelled 'murder!' three or four times he fell under an ice cream table, and the mild-eyed Scandinavian broke a caster over the organ of self-esteem, and poured red pepper and salt and vinegar and Halford sauce and other relishes on the place where the scalp was loose.

This revived the brave but murderous cow gentleman and he begged that he might be allowed to go away.

The gentle superintendent of the ten stamp ice cream freezer then took the revolvers away from the bold buccaneer and kicked him out through a showcase, and saluted him with a bouquet of July oysters that suffered severely from malaria.

All cowboys are not sanguinary; but out of twenty you will generally find one who is brave when he has his revolvers with him; but when he forgot and left his shooters at home on the piano, the most tropical violet-eyed dude can climb him with the butt end of a sunflower and beat his brains out, and spatter them all over that school district.

In the wild, unfettered west beware of the man who never carries arms, never gets drunk, and always minds his own business. He doesn't go around shooting out the gas or intimidating a kindergarten school; but when the brave frontiersman, with a revolver in each boot, and a bowie knife down the back of his neck, insults a modest young lady and needs to be thrown through a plate glass window and then walked over by the populace, call on the silent man who dares to wear a clean shirt and human clothes.

Poisonous Wall Paper.

The following eminating from a firm of practical manufacturers, of Edingburg, may be a useful contribution to the discussion on the subject of poisonous colors in wall papers: "In a long and practical experience as color manufacturers, we have never known arsenic used in the manufacture of any color suitable for wall paper except emerald green. This bright and beautiful color has never been equaled by any no-arsenical green; but it is expensive, and of very poor covering properties. For greens, blacks, blues, browns, reds, yellows, etc., either dry or in oil, the color maker has no need to use arsenic, and we cannot conceive what object would be served by his doing so, and certainly he would not do so in reducing a color to a tint with white. Years ago, a yellow was used called 'king's,' or 'canary' yellow, containing arsenic; but it is long out of date, and was only used by coach painters. The whole matter rests upon the medium by which the tint or color is fixed to the paper or wall, and the volatility of any component part. Even emerald green is perfectly harmless if properly secured by oil or varnish; but when used in cheap and showy papers where there is little or no fixed material, we can understand there is danger if exposed to undue heat. In better class papers it is seldom used. In regard to abstaining from the use of poisonous metallic substances in the manufacture of wall papers, we can only say, that, unless scraped off and eaten, they are perfectly harmless."

The Mystery of Dreams.

A man fell asleep as the clock tolled the first stroke of twelve. He awakened ere the twelfth stroke had died away, having in the interval dreamed that he had committed a crime, was detected after five years, tried and condemned; the shock of finding the halter around his neck aroused him to consciousness, when he discovered that all these events had happened in an infinitesimal fragment of time. Mohammed, wishing to illustrate the wonders of sleep, told how a certain man being a shiek, found himself, for his pride, made a poor fisherman; that he lived as one for sixty years, bringing up a family and working hard, and how, upon waking up from his long dream, so short a time had he been asleep that the narrow-necked gourd bottle, filled with water, which he knew he overturned as he fell asleep, had not time to empty itself. How fast the soul travels when the body is asleep! Often when we awake we shrink from going in the dull routine of a sordid existence, regretting the pleasanter life of dreamland. How is it that sometimes when we go to a strange place, we fancy that we have seen it before? Is it possible that when one has been asleep, the soul has floated away, seen the place, and has that memory of it which so surprises us? In a word, how far dual is the life of man, how far not?

Salaries of Poet-Laureates.

When James I appointed Ben Jonson poet laureate he gave him an annual salary of 100 marks, equal to $335. On Jonson's rhymed petition to "The best of monarchs, masters, men," Charles I increased the poet's pension to $500, giving him "one tierce of Canary Spanish wine out of our store of wines yearly." The salary was adequate for the conveniences of life at the time, being the same as was paid to the king's physician; but both pension and puncheon were often in arrears. Davenant was nominally laureate for thirty years, but owing to political commotion and the Puritan ascendancy was far from obtaining regular payment of his salary. Dryden was made laureate and historiographer royal in 1679, the two appointments joined in one patent giving him $1000 a year—equal to at least $3000 nowadays—and the tierce of Canary, his salary being subsequently increased to $1500, with an additional pension of $500, dependent on the king's pleasure.

Telegraphing Without Arms.

At the school for telegraphy in Ann Arbor, Mich., one of the students has not the use of his arms, yet he sends and receives messages all right. On the table in front of him is a pencil and stick. Taking the pencil between his teeth he can write a good hand—if that is what one would call it—and with the stick in his mouth and resting on the key he can send messages at the rate of about seventeen words per minute. His name is Manly Shotwell, of Concord, Jackson county.

The Old Churchyard.

Breathe soft and low, oh whispering wind,
Above the tangled grasses deep,
Where those who loved me long ago
Forgot the world and fell asleep.
No towering shaft or sculptured urn
Or mausoleum's empty pride,
Tells to the curious passer-by
Their virtues or the time they died.

I count the old familiar names,
O'ergrown with moss and lichen grey,
Where tangled brier and creeping vine
Across the crumbling tablets stray.
The summer sky is softly blue;
The birds still sing the sweet, old strain;
But something from the summer-time
Is gone that will not come again.

So many voices have been hushed—
So many songs have ceased for aye—
So many hands I used to touch
Are folded over hearts of clay.
The mossy world recedes from me—
I cease to hear its praise or blame;
The mossy marbles echo back
No hollow sound or empty fame.

I only know that, calm and still,
They sleep beyond life's woes and wail,
Beyond the fleet of sailing clouds,
Beyond the shadow of the vail;
I only feel that, tired and worn,
I halt upon the highway bare,
And gaze with yearning eyes beyond
To fields that shine supremely fair.

HUMOROUS.

A counter fit—A ready-made suit.

A knotty question—What kind of a tie do you wear?

In leap year the girls are liable to jump at any chance.

"Jumping at conclusions"—Reading the last chapter of a serial first.

Brass band music goes by the pound, but church music by the choir.

Why is a trifling indebtedness like a song? Because it is a little ode.

Grief is a queer passion. It increases the sighs, and still causes one to pine away.

The chaps who fling the lariat among the wild steers are the noose-boys of the west.

Nowadays, when little children sneak into the pastry closets, they become mince spies.

A drunken man is seldom injured by a fall and he probably isn't by a spring—if the water is good.

It is said an Arizona judge resigned from the bench to become a hotel waiter. The judicial ermine may satisfy a man's vanity, but it does not always fill the void created by the want of three square meals a day.

When Shakespeare wrote "All the world's a stage, and men and women merely players," the great dramatist could not have had the faintest idea of how many there would be in the nineteenth century anxious to play as Romeo or as Juliet.

A gentleman was giving a little Keokuk baby boy some peanuts the other day. The good mother said "Now, what are you going to say to the gentleman?" With childish simplicity the little fellow looked up in the gentleman's face and replied: "More!"

He—Before you give my old overcoat to that beggar, my dear, had you not better look through the pockets? She—When did you wear it last? He—The latter part of last March, I think. She—Then I know there's nothing in the pockets? He—How so? She—Because that was before you stopped drinking.

An exchange contains an editorial entitled "Modify the age," but it would entail too much labor. Ninety-nine out of every hundred women who have passed their 25th birthday would want their age modified so they might tell their friends they were only 18 years old without lying about it. The scheme is not practicable.

Speed and Fares.

It appears from some figures given in a recent speech by M. Banderali, the chief engineer to the North of France railway company, that, in point of speed at any rate, English railways still stand first. The actual speed attained there sometimes reaches 65½ miles an hour, while in France, Germany and America it never exceeds 62½. The average "mean speed" (i. e. the speed measured by the time taken between terminal stations) is 48½ miles an hour with English express trains and 45 with French. M. Banderali points out that the English railways have one advantage to start with, for it is not obligatory, as it is in most foreign countries, to slacken at crossings. In the matter of fares, England and France enjoy the distinction of charging third class passengers more than any other country except Turkey. The average fare in Turkey is 8.75 centimes per kilometre (⅝ mile), in France 6.75, and in England 6.74. Norway is by far the cheapest country for railway traveling, the third class fares there averaging 1.4 centimes, and next comes Russia and Belgium, where the average fare is 4.75 centimes per kilometre.